

Nyland School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126544
Local Authority	Swindon
Inspection number	340995
Inspection dates	23–24 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Judith Goodchild

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	25
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Tolhurst
Headteacher	Paul Sunners
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited four lessons, observed break times and held meetings with the chair of governors, local authority representatives and senior leaders. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including four responses to the questionnaire for parents.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at the following:

- safeguarding procedures
- the quality of teaching and assessments systems in the light of recent disruption to staffing
- systems for managing behaviour
- the effectiveness of the current arrangements for leadership and management including governance
- how effectively the curriculum meets the needs of pupils.

Information about the school

Nyland School is a small, special primary school providing education for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs and some have been identified as having additional learning problems. The majority of pupils are boys of White British origin and their home language is English. There are four classes, two mixed-age and the other two specifically for Years 5 and 6. The number on roll is lower than at the last inspection. There has been considerable disruption to staffing in recent times and the school is currently without permanent teaching staff. All teachers, and some support assistants, are short-term supply staff. In the headteacher's absence, the school was led by an interim headteacher in the summer of 2009, and from September 2009 is being led by an executive headteacher and interim management team put into place by the local authority and appointed for the current academic year.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

This school has experienced significant staffing changes that have been unsettling for pupils. The changes have resulted in a lack of continuity in pupil's learning and weaknesses in managing their behaviour. Standards in the school are low and pupils' achievement is inadequate.

The lack of secure information about pupils' starting points and shortcomings in assessment systems to track their progress mean that the school's leaders have inadequate knowledge of pupils' learning. This reduces teachers' ability to plan work that is matched to pupils' individual learning needs. Poor behaviour and inconsistent management of it reduce the opportunity for pupils to learn. Too much time in lessons is spent dealing with disruption. A rewards system linked to the recently introduced behaviour policy encourages positive responses and is beginning to be valued by pupils, but staff are inconsistent in the awarding of merits. Pupils, particularly the older ones, do not understand the impact of their actions on others, and classrooms are often unsafe places for other pupils and staff. Where teaching matches pupils' needs, behaviour is often good, and pupils are engaged and enjoy learning. The curriculum does not meet sufficiently well the emotional and academic needs of pupils. Much of it is not adapted sufficiently to the needs of pupils and does not interest or engage them.

Child protection procedures meet statutory requirements but safeguarding is inadequate because risk assessments are not in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. The school has re-established links with support agencies and other organisations to ensure there is a coherent approach to supporting pupils and their families. The school is now working closely with local primary schools and currently five pupils are on a reintegration programme. Arrangements for transition at the end of Year 6 are improving through constructive links with the local secondary school. The partnership with parents is also improving and parents recognise the efforts of the new leadership team to engage with them. A parents' support group has been started, run by the parent support worker and mental health services. A recent, introductory 'fresh start' evening to discuss with parents the new behaviour policy was well attended.

The temporary senior leadership team has begun to act on an accurate self-evaluation produced by the interim headteacher at the end of the summer term. Although the

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school's leaders are clear about what needs to be done, and have made progress in some areas, it is too early for them to have had a significant impact on improving the school. There is still a long way to go in restoring good behaviour and ensuring that the school's provision effectively meets pupils' needs. The temporary nature of staffing also has an adverse impact on the efforts of leaders to move the school forward. The school receives strong support from the local authority, but the governing body does not fulfil its role effectively in keeping the school under review or ensuring it fulfils statutory requirements. The school is not yet showing that it has the capacity to improve. It has deteriorated significantly since the last inspection and current initiatives are too new to have had a demonstrable impact.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve behaviour as a matter of urgency, so that pupils are clear about the standards expected and learning is not disrupted, by:
 - developing consistency among staff in the awarding of merits for positive behaviour
 - carrying out and acting upon risk assessments to ensure the health and safety of pupils and adults.
- Introduce assessment systems as a matter of urgency so that:
 - pupils' progress can be tracked and increased over time to ensure it is at least satisfactory information is available to teachers to guide their lesson-planning, so that their teaching meets pupils' individual learning needs.
- Improve the curriculum to ensure that it engages pupils and meets their emotional and academic needs.
- Increase the governing body's skill in checking and challenging the school's performance and in ensuring that statutory requirements are met.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Pupils' attainment was low in 2008 and the school's data show that it is the same in 2009. Poor behaviour is the most significant barrier to learning. Where teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour, pupils cooperate well with staff and enjoy the activities they are given to do. In such lessons, pupils behave well and make satisfactory progress. Elsewhere, however, some pupils' poor behaviour constantly disrupts the lesson with the consequence that no learning takes place, relationships break down and pupils do not respond to staff. This behaviour causes anxiety in other pupils about their safety. Pupils do not always see the relevance of what they are being asked to do and lose interest in learning. Some disruptive behaviour is orchestrated by pupils to avoid participating in activities that do not interest them.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is inadequate because pupils generally have little understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others. Many pupils have very limited knowledge about the factors that affect their health, safety and

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well-being. They have no responsibilities within the school or wider community. Pupils' preparation for the next stage of their education and the world beyond is inadequate because of weaknesses in their social relationships or ability to work as a team, and because of their poor basic skills. Their attendance last year was low, but since the beginning of term there has been a significant improvement. Improved links with support agencies are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' attendance and learning.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	4
Pupils' behaviour	4
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	4
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	4
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

How effective is the provision?

The lack of recorded assessment information adversely affects the quality of lesson-planning and limits the progress pupils make in their learning. This shortcoming is particularly significant as all teachers are temporary and have little knowledge about pupils' achievements when they start teaching a class. The assessing of pupils on arrival at the school is planned but has not yet been carried out. Behaviour management techniques, though at times successful in defusing potentially difficult situations, do not always re-engage pupils in their tasks. Disruption often spoils pupils' learning. All staff

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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have received specialist training to deal with troublesome behaviour, although teaching staff have not yet been able to develop their confidence and expertise. The role of teaching assistants is not clearly defined so they are unable to support learning and behaviour management effectively. At times they are unwilling to take the initiative in managing challenging behaviour and prefer to rely on members of the senior management team to handle difficult situations. This situation has not improved since the previous inspection. The most successful teaching, which really engages pupils, is in the nurture group where lesson planning is secure and the individual learning and developmental needs of pupils are met. A 'Skills for Learning' activity, observed with a group of year 3 and 4 pupils also effectively engaged their attention and challenged them to think. Consequently their behaviour was good.

The curriculum has significant shortcomings in meeting pupils' emotional and academic needs and does not help them to make progress. There is little evidence of information and communication technology being used as a learning tool. An audit of statements of special educational needs has enabled the school to build a profile of pupils' specific needs. Leaders have not yet been able to use this effectively to ensure that the school meets the needs identified. The recently introduced behaviour policy and rewards system is valued by pupils and is beginning to motivate them to make positive choices about their behaviour. However, the lack of consistency among staff in awarding merits causes some confusion about expectations among pupils. Individual behaviour plans are in place for all pupils but no risk assessments exist for those with particularly challenging behaviour. Recent progress has been made in establishing links with specialist agencies, such as the mental health team, to support pupils and their families and the school is now represented at core group meetings. Arrangements for the reintegration of pupils into mainstream schools are satisfactory.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

The interim management team is clearly committed to improving this school. The local authority is providing strong support and, in conjunction with the senior team and governors, has produced a recovery plan that addresses the difficult situation the school faces. There has not yet been enough time for senior leaders to introduce systems to check the current work of the school and set targets, and hence there are still significant weaknesses in keeping the school's performance under review. Improving the quality of

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teaching and the management of behaviour is hindered by the lack of permanent staff. As noted at the previous inspection, senior staff spend a significant amount of time in dealing with incidents of challenging behaviour and this has a detrimental effect on their ability to carry out their leadership roles. Child protection procedures meet statutory requirements, but safeguarding overall is inadequate because of the volatile atmosphere in some lessons and the lack of risk assessment. These factors, together with pupils' poor academic skills, indicate that the school's promotion of equal opportunities is inadequate.

The development of links with parents has been successful and a parents' group now meets weekly at the school. Daily contact is made through home-school diaries, that now contain positive comments, and parents say they are much more at ease in contacting the school. The school does little in the wider community, however, and does not make an effective contribution to community cohesion.

The governing body is supportive of the school, but over the last year there have been many changes of governors. At present, governors do not monitor the work of the school sufficiently well and do not know how to help it to improve.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Views of parents and carers

Very few parents responded to the questionnaire and so some caution must be exercised in interpreting their responses to represent the views of all. Those that did respond hold generally positive views of the school. They recognise that it has gone through a difficult period but are positive about the future and the new leadership.

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Concern was expressed about the progress their children were making and how effectively the school meets their needs. The inspector found that the school is now working closely with parents and is seeking to improve the information and support that is available to them.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Nyland School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 4 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 25 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	1	25	1	25	2	50	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	1	25	2	50	1	25	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	1	25	3	75	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	1	25	0	0	1	25	1	25
The teaching is good at this school	1	25	1	25	1	25	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	1	25	3	75	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	1	25	2	50	1	25	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	1	25	0	0	3	75	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	2	50	0	0	1	25	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	1	25	1	25	1	25	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	1	25	3	75	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	1	25	1	25	1	25	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	1	25	1	25	1	25	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



25 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nyland School, Nyland Road, Swindon, SN3 3RD

I recently visited your school and I understand the difficulties the school has been going through over the last few months. I am writing to let you know what I found out.

You are not doing well enough and the behaviour of some of you is getting in the way of learning. Most of you who completed the questionnaire said that you enjoy school and feel safe. You particularly like the recently introduced rewards system for good behaviour. This shows that some changes are already making a difference. Where lessons are exciting and interesting, you join in well and your behaviour is good.

However, there are areas of the school's work that need a lot of improvement in order to make it a better place. To help the school make the progress it needs, it requires 'special measures', and this means that it will be visited by another inspector every term for a period of up to two years. These are the improvements the school should make. It should:

- help you to improve your behaviour so that everybody feels safe in lessons and can learn; it should make sure staff use the new rewards system in a way that is fair to all of you
- make sure that there are systems in place to track your progress and to help teachers to plan lessons that meet your needs
- ensure activities are interesting so you enjoy them more and understand why you are studying a particular topic
- develop the skills of the governing body in checking that things are improving for you.

You should also play your part in getting the most from school by attending regularly and trying to behave well and work hard at all times.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Judith Goodchild

Lead Inspector

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